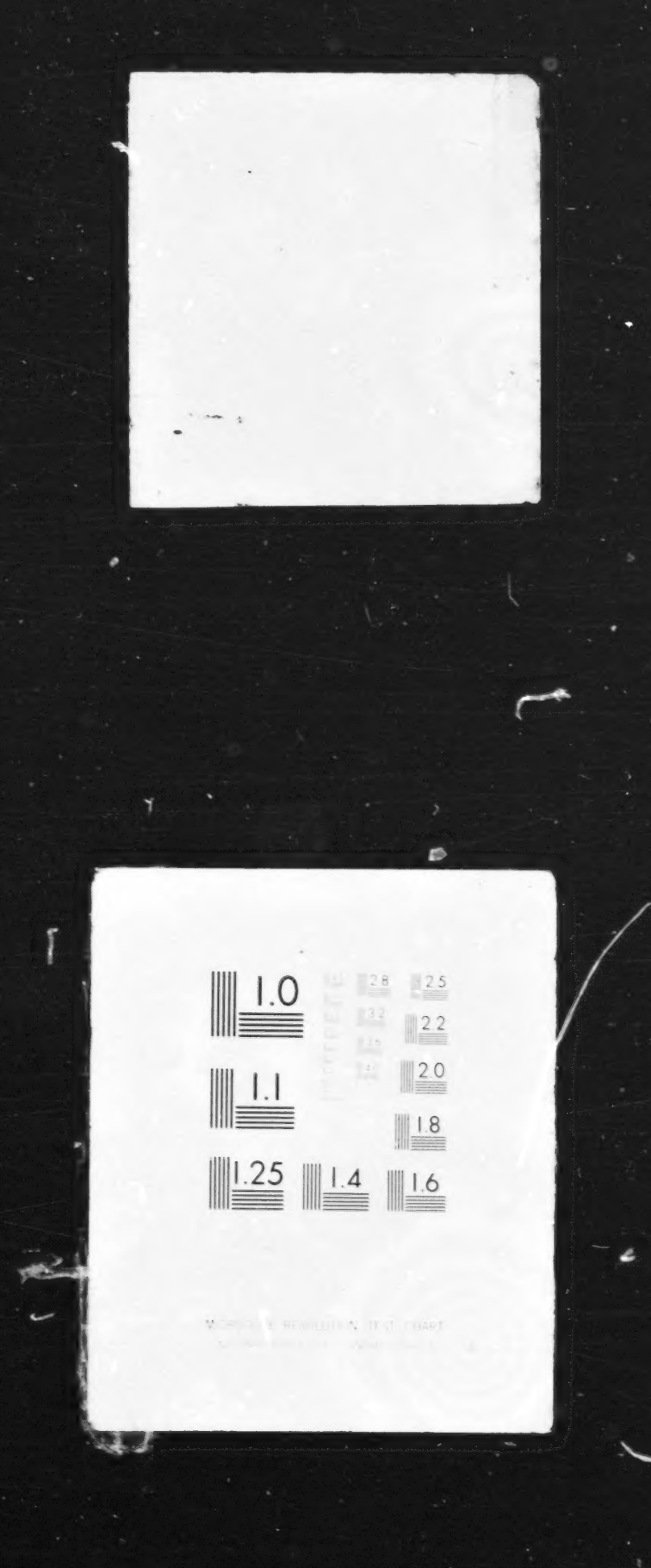
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ABSTRACT

Described is a model which provided support services to five severely hearing impaired students (4 14-years-old) integrated fully or partially into regular classes in Massachusetts. The model (developed by the Clarke School for the Deaf) is explained to involve current and ongoing assessment of educational needs, coordination of services to children and families, a cost effective way for school districts to meet special education requirements, and tutorial sessions for individual children. (DB)

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"A Model for Support Services to Mainstreamed Hearing Impaired Children"

Linda W. Nober, Ed.D., Clarke School for the Deaf

Introduction:

The legislative mandate of Special Education Chapter 766 which was enacted in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in September, 1974 has presented school districts with a variety of complex problems regrading mainstreamed hearing impaired children. Due to the low-incidence base of severe hearing impairment within the low population density of the geographic area, The Clarke School for the Deaf, Center for Audiological Services, developed a program of involvement of personnel from such specialized schools to function and assist in educational programming in public school settings. This model of support services presents information which relates directly to the new federal legislative mandates (PL 94-142) as well as the numerous state laws of similar intent. Several aspects of the Massachusetts law presented areas of concern to school districts. The law was enacted without substantive funding to school districts, prompting school districts to write educational plans which could be implemented. In many instances, "grandfathering" of children already placed in specialized schools or segregated programs was accomplished by having school districts participate in an elaborate system of providing "front money" which might be reimbursible the following year. Several districts, with adequate staffing and programming for handicapped children under the old legislation had inconsistent re-funding for programs the following year. Other school districts attempted to initiate programs for children with special needs, where previously there were none or most inadequate programs, (Domina, 1975). The parental advocacy-approval aspect of the law was particularly well received by parents of hearing impaired children, since this parent sub-group has had a traditional role in lobbying for improved services and has had the support of a national organization with well-developed parent group action, (Nober, 1974).

Many school districts within the region had become familiar with the Audiological Center of the Clarke School for the Deaf, as they had referred their students with marked hearing loss to the Center for audiological evaluations in the instances where local districts were unable to provide intensive evaluations. In response to parent and school district referrals,

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the Center developed and initiated a projected model of support services which school districts might elect to provide specific assistance regarding educational programming and tutorials to their hearing impaired children. This Outreach model was implemented on a pilot base during January, 1975 through June, 1976. Participation of personnel from the specialized, primarily residential school for the deaf, varies with each of the five children involved in this pilot project, however, the basic tenets of the model can be described in overview.

Scope of the Model

In collaboration with directors of pupil personnel services, teachers, parents and staff of the specialized school, it was determined that the most needed support service goals could be summarized as follows:

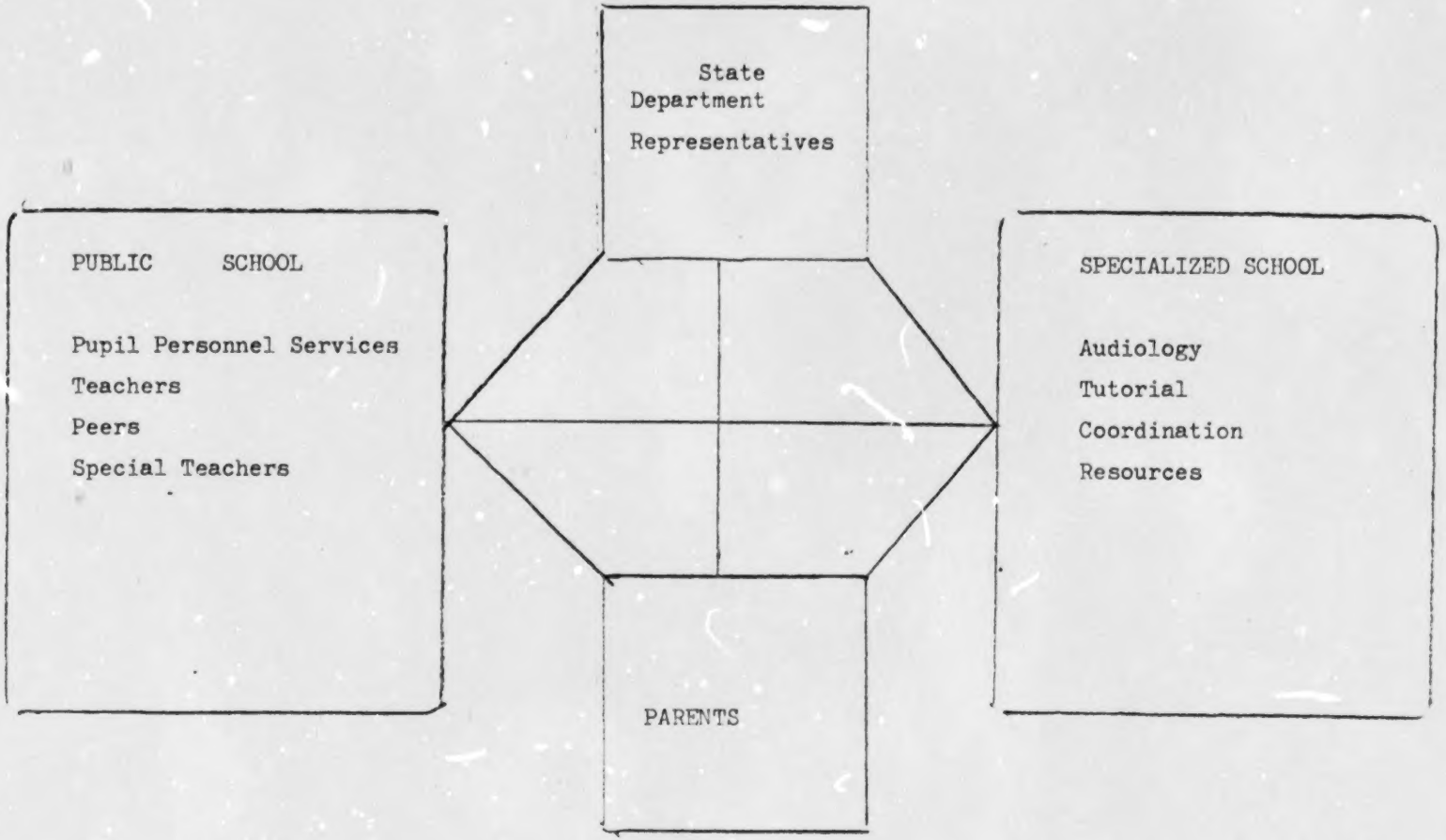
1. Current and on-going assessment of educational needs by personnel specialized in the language problems of the hearing impaired.
2. Coordination of services to children and families to improve communication to and between schools and families.
3. Cost effectiveness to school districts already burdened by increases in budgeting for special needs programs.
4. Tutorial sessions designed for individual children and coordinated with school curriculae.

(INSERT FIGURE # 1)

Through interactions with State Department of Education representatives in the region and referrals, approximately fifteen children were evaluated as potential candidates for the pilot program at no cost to referring districts. Final selection of the five candidates was based upon the following: severity of handicap, proximity to the facility, potential for parental involvement, impact of up-graded services on present and future school district special needs programs, and age/grade range. The previous year, one child had received such programming through the specialized school and was the first candidate for continuation during the pilot progran. The develop-

FIGURE # 1

OUTREACH MODEL



ment of the specific goals of the model was based on the needs of the potential candidates, availability of personnel, published references to other programs in states where legislation had been enacted, suitability to assessment, (Bitter, G., and Johnston, K., 1973). In all issues, adherence to state law or codes of ethics of national certification associations was maintained.

The specific goals can be summarized as follows:

a. Assessment of current educational needs in conjunction with school personnel.

b. Design of an educational plan agreed to by parents.

c. Coordination of parental goals and involvements.

d. In-service programs to school districts.

e. Orientation programs to children.

f. Resource functions of specialized instructional materials, technical assistance, and selection of classroom amplification systems.

g. Audiometric assessments as necessary.

h. Assessment and re-evaluation of the effectiveness of the educational plan.

i. Summer tutorial programs.

Rationale for Goals

As part of Special Education Chapter 766, a Core Evaluation Team (CET) comprised of classroom teacher, specialists, parents, medical personnel or other professional categories, would be responsible for designing and writing an individual educational plan for each child identified as having special needs. All hearing impaired children were included in this guideline. In order to implement the Outreach support services model, it was suggested that the composition of the CET for hearing impaired children under the umbrella of Outreach, include or be directed by personnel from the specialized school. The rationale for this inclusion in the writing of the educational plan included: provision for additional services, evaluations of auditory sensitivity, and improvement of the liason between parents and service delivery sources. Frequently, personnel from the school for the deaf were most appropriate to conduct formal testing with this population. School psychologists deferred to the specially trained psychologist at the specialized school for assessment due to his familiarity with language problems of the deaf, as well as dichotomies between verbal

and performance aspects of evaluation instruments. The inclusion of parents as part of the CET is provided in the law. However, this multi-dimensional CET permitted support for parents who might need additional information.

The specialized school personnel became available to provide in-service education to school districts by providing materials, resources, formal presentations, instructional materials and orientation programs to classes of children who would have among them a hearing impaired peer. These services were included during on-site visitations as part of conferences, observations, presentations, etc. In several instances, additional resources were made available to interested teachers through state department representatives or visits by teachers to the school for the deaf.

The provisions of the law for evaluation and assessment of progress or suitability of the educational plan assisted the Center's pilot accountability. Modifications have included: increasing or descreasing participation of the special coordinator, arranging for summer tutorials, staff development programs on the methods and rationale of pre-teaching as a tutorial, additional audiological evaluations, purchase of suitable amplification devices for teacher directed use, parental counseling.

Delineation of Support Services

The model designed called upon the talents and resources of the school district as the most desireable vendor of services. In cases where programs or personnel were not available, additional services were purchased by schools on a direct-cost level, providing credentialed, suitably trained personnel at either the specialized school or public school facility. The five children involved in the pilot can be depicted as follows:

(INSERT FIGURE # 2)

Staff Involvment of the Specialized School

This Outreach program is under the direction of the Director of the Center for Audiological Services who serves as the administrator of the project for the special school. A part time Coordinator of Outreach services was employed 20% time to provide coordination of services between the facilities. Approximately ¼ (one quarter) time is devoted to coordination, broken down

FIGURE # 2

DELINEATION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

CHILD	AGE	GRADE	PUBLIC SCHOOL	OUTREACH
C.S.	9	4	full integration, speech therapy, tutorials	audiological, special assessments, coordination
J.S.	6	K	full integration, no special services	audiological, language tutorials, special assessments, coordination
A.H.	8	3	partial integration, ½ day special program	audiological, language assessments and tutorial
B.M.	4	Pre	speech therapy-summer	pre-school placement, language tutorial, special referrals, coordination, assessments
A.G.	14	J.H.S.	full integration	audiological, special assessments, aural rehabilitation, tutorial

to ½ (one half) day per month per child visitations, plus an additional ½ (one half) day per month for conference, planning, evaluation. The Center also employs one full time ASHA CCC audiologist and three trained teachers of the deaf who provide tutorials to Outreach students or provide preschool programs. The resources of the large school for the deaf, including departments of psychology, pre-school, lower, middle and upper divisions, library and media, residential life, etc. , are available to the Outreach staff as needed. The resources of the full facility are available for site visits by public school staff at any time.

Costs to school districts are primarily in two categories: educational planning and assessment, including monitoring and coordination; and direct services as tutorials. There is no profit factor included in the cost analysis as secretarial, duplication, telephone and mailing costs are borne by each school's overhead. Current state guidelines are used to determine costs for services.

Assessment Trends

This pilot year terminated in June 1976 and provided assessment data in the following two categories:

(1) Educational achievement of the children involved in the program. Wherever possible, this data was compiled by the public school in the same way other children within the school were assessed. Typically a combination of standardized tests given to all children in a particular grade and teacher evaluation were inlcuded.

(2) Attitudes of parents, pupil personnel services directors, teachers and state department representatives were compiled by the personnel of the special school under the Outreach program.

The results of the pilot program for each of the five children are summarized(in the above noted two categories) as follows:

Child		Evaluation Notes
C.S.	(1)	Standardized test results indicate grade level achievement in major academic areas. Teacher evaluations are consistent in achievement. All involved personnel report satisfactory social adjustment.
	(2)	Outreach program to continue for coming year. Parents and pupil personnel director strongly support program. State

Child		Evaluation Notes
C.S. con't		Department involvement approves placement for 5th grade-full integration with support services.
J.S.	(1)	Teacher evaluation indicates social adjustment above age level. Pre-reading skills developed at grade level. Language acquisition growth equivalent to two years achievement during this year.
	(2)	Outreach program to continue for coming year. Parents and school district personnel display support for program.
A.H.	(1)	Teacher evaluation indicates academic achievement nearing grade level. Tutorials to continue.
	(2)	Outreach program to be limited to tutorials. Behavior management and parental involvement to increase.
B.W.	(1)	Teacher evaluation of pre-school skills indicates increased language development, improved medical management, hearing aid fitting, parent guidance programs.
	(2)	Placement for coming year within integrated pre-school. Outreach limited to coordination with school district planning.
J.G.	(1)	Teacher evaluation indicates no demonstrable change in academic achievement. Tutor evaluation indicates language skills several years below grade level. Placement in vocational program for coming year.
	(2)	Outreach program discontinued.

In addition to the results indicated above, several factors are noteworthy. This pilot program was able to provide cost effective, quality based services to a variety of school districts within the region. In 80% of the cases, Outreach will continue in some modified form during the coming year. State department support for the design and implementation of the program has been encouraging. Many children and families who were evaluated by the staff of the Center during the year as "Alternate Evaluation Services" indicate interest in partic-

ipating in such a program during the coming year. The economic feasibility of such involvement was the major factor of concern to school districts.

Applicability to Other Programs

Specific benefits may be projected from this particular model of Outreach from a specialized school to public school districts faced with providing up-graded services to children with special needs. In general, school district staff members are unable to provide adequate services to severely impaired children due to: time-caseload frames, lack of training, professional judgement. The faculties of specialized schools are able to assess and plan for integrated education particularly regarding evaluation and tutorials when coordinated programs are devised. Of particular concern, is the child in transition between attendance in a specialized school and public school environment, and in these cases this model appears most feasible. This critical time for children and parents requires additional support from facility to facility. The single most important area of specialized skills was noted in psychological assessments. Intensive specialized tutorials (in most cases oriented to language acquisition) were also noted as very meaningful.

During the initial stages of the program, many directors of pupil personnel services voiced their concern regarding pre-vocational and vocational training for hearing impaired children within their districts. The Commonwealth statute includes children ages 3-21 years. Both extremes of the age continuum present staffing and alternative programming difficulties. During the coming year, it is expected that the Outreach program will attempt to meet these state mandated goals by improved relationships with state agencies responsible for Rehabilitation.

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